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**AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:**

Please amend paragraph [0039] of the published application as follows:

[0039] The following description will discuss the binarizing operation. First, the image processing section 30 (FIG. 2) selects a target pixel to which the binarizing operation is applied (step 404). The binarizing operation is carried out on all the pixels within an input image; and the target pixel may be selected, for example, from pixels starting with the upper left pixel of the image in the right direction in succession.

Thus, the target pixels are selected irrespective of any conditions.